

Minutes
Workforce Steering Committee Meeting
August 19, 2002

Attendees:

Betty Creamer
Burk Blob
Cheri Stierer
Debbie Burcham
Jennifer Fidura
Jessica Burmester
Raymond Burmester
John Dool
Marion Greenfield
Mary Clair O'Hara
Joyce Willis
Paul Hardesty
Peggy Holland
Steve Waldron
Tanya Griffith
Neila Gunter
Paul Gilding

The purpose of this meeting was to review the comments received from the pilot agencies, CSB's and private providers which were chosen to complete and review the draft workforce survey as a trial run. Positive feedback was received for content in the survey; however, the sections for salary and turnover information was said to be labor intensive. Also, it was noted that the format of the survey needs to be changed to the "bubble" type format so that information can be assimilated in an easier manner.

The major change to the survey will be an additional job description review for Licensed Clinical Social Workers/Licensed Professional Counselors. The rural CSB's have maintained there is a shortage of staff for this category; therefore, it will be added to the final survey. In order to justify this addition, it was agreed that if the survey results demonstrate a problem with this category, the rural CSB's who are affected will have representatives convene to discuss and provide recommendations to the steering committee before it is included in the final report.

A variety of changes were discussed regarding the draft survey, and the Central Office will incorporate those changes as soon as possible, including the format changes. As soon as the final product is completed, it will be e-mailed to all steering committee members for their final review. A copy will also be forwarded to Bill Edmonds for his review before mailing to the CSB's.

Due to the budgetary constraints, the letter accompanying the survey will state that the information gathered after reviewing the completed surveys will be used to build a baseline for the next few years. Workforce retention will not be an overnight project. This will be a continuing effort throughout the next several years. We expect the survey to demonstrate the dramatic crisis in which our system now faces, and will face in the future, both in the public and private sector. We will also advise individuals completing the survey that the steering committee, at this time, cannot promise initiation of new programs due to budget constraints. However, workforce efforts will continue, but may be on a smaller scale than originally thought. Also included in the accompanying letter, we will state what the survey results will be used for, why we are proceeding with this effort, and how we expect to use the information. After all survey results are tabulated, a copy of the results will be mailed to those who completed the survey.

Prior to mailing the survey, Neila Gunter and other members of the steering committee will meet with Commissioner Reinhard and give him an update on where the committee is now and also let him know the expectations of the committee.

Also mentioned, was the need to report back to the System Leadership Council and advise them where we are and how we hope to proceed with workforce retention issues.

The private providers and the VACSB are also gathering data regarding workforce retention. Jennifer Fidura has a copy of the survey. The results from this survey may enhance the information we gather from our survey.

Lastly, Betty Creamer, from Southside VA Training Center discussed a program which she recently heard about through the Roundtable Virginia. This program and initiative allocates funding to six different states, one being Virginia, for economically depressed areas. Betty will be getting further information on this, and in the meantime, if any steering committee member is interested in obtaining further information, you can e-mail Betty at bcreamers@svtc.state.va.us.